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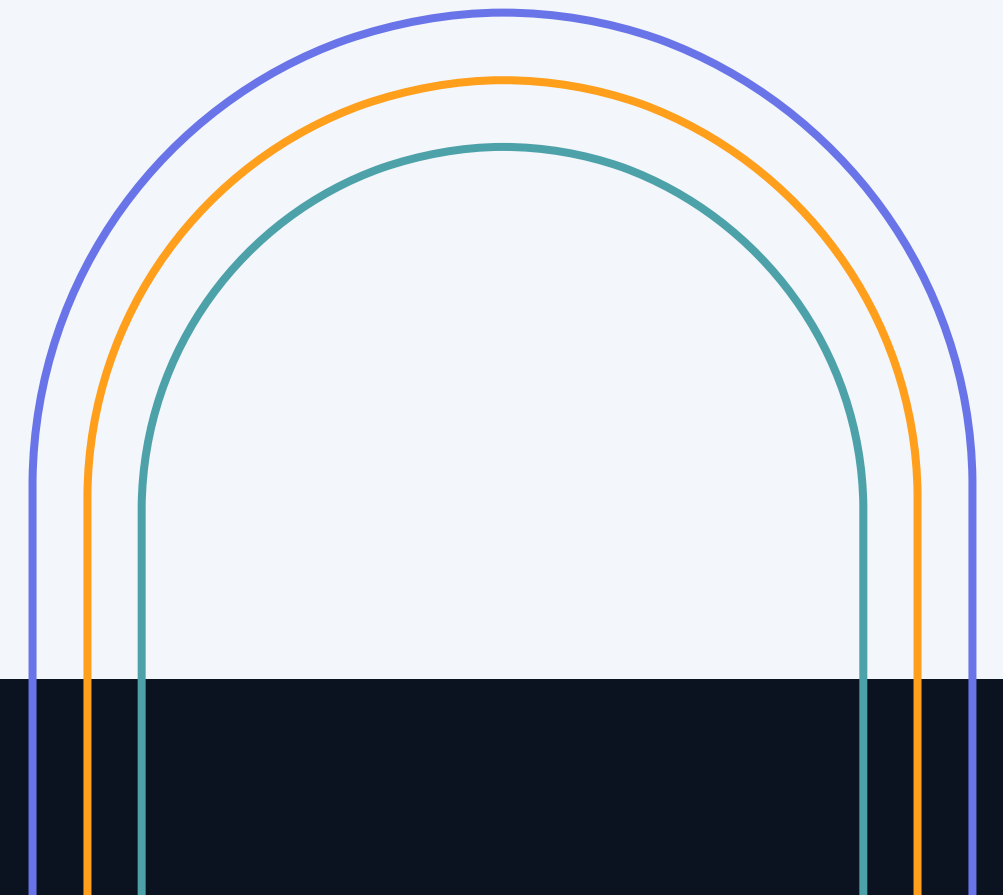
# Arlington Votes 16

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## Warrant Article

#22

Sophie Shen, junior at Arlington High School



# We want to lower the voting age in order to:

1

Improve civic engagement



2

Strengthen civics education



3

Empower Young people



01.

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# Improving Civic Engagement

# Voting is a Habit



- Studies show that voting is a habit
  - Once someone votes in one election, they more likely to vote in subsequent elections
    - Lowering the voting age in local elections can serve as a catalyst for increased turnout nationwide in later elections.
- Higher turnout is better for our democracy, then lowering the voting age is one path to achieve that goal

American Journal of Political Science

02.

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Strengthening

Civics

Education

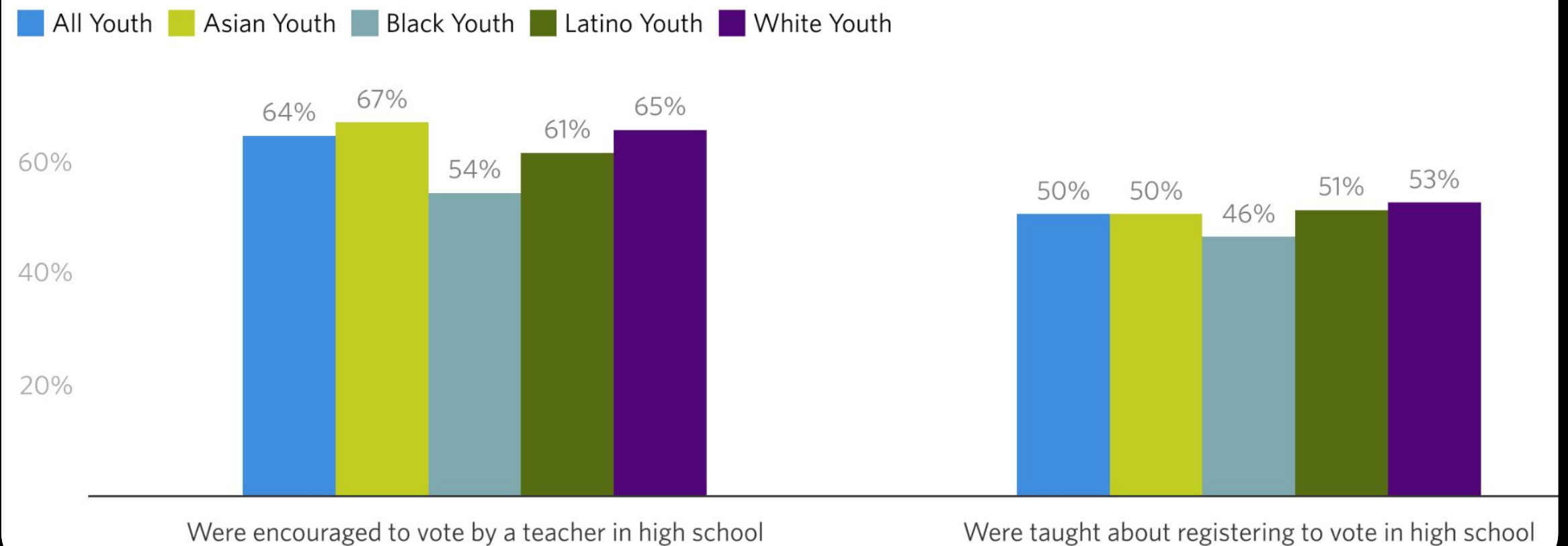
# Tufts Findings



## Encourage students to vote because:

We can promote more diverse voices! Black and Latinx youth least likely to be taught about voter registration

Young People's Civic Experiences in High School Vary by Race/Ethnicity



03.

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# Empower Young People



# 16 Year Olds are Ready to Vote

- “Cold” cognition makes up deliberation and measured decision making.
  - “The dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, which tends to develop at about age 15, controls the functions of planning and abstract, logical reasoning”
    - These “cold” cognition capabilities do not improve in later years.
- 16 and 17 year olds scored about the same as older adults on measures of political tolerance, skill, efficacy, and interest



# Common myths

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## Myth #1

16 and 17 year olds are  
not responsible  
enough to vote

16 and 17 year olds can

- Drive
- Work jobs
- Pay taxes
- Be tried as adults for serious crimes

# Common myths

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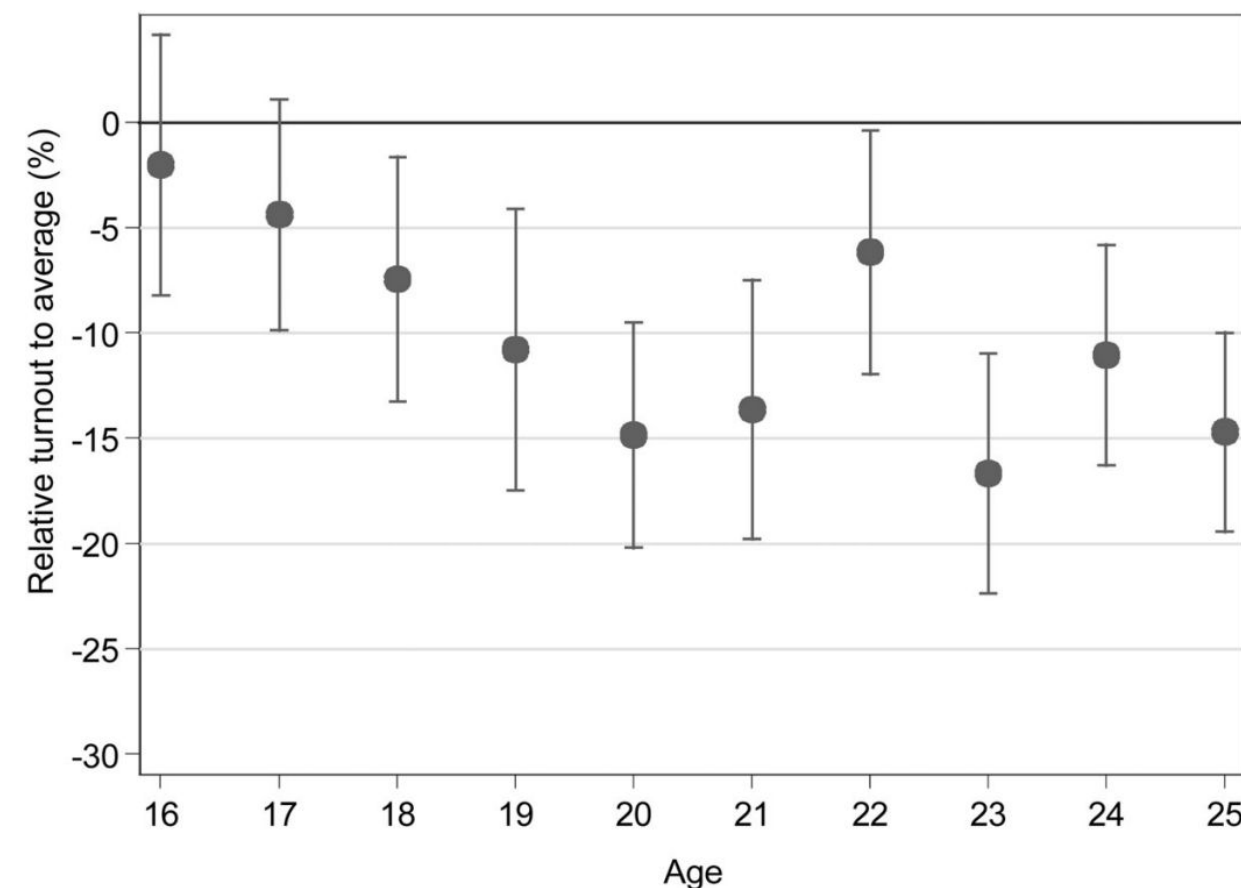
## Myth #2

Young people are not interested in politics

- Model Congress and Model UN
  - Over 1,500 students participate in Harvard Model Congress each year, and it continues to grow.
- Protests (climate, war, etc.)

# Success in Austria

Study done in 2010



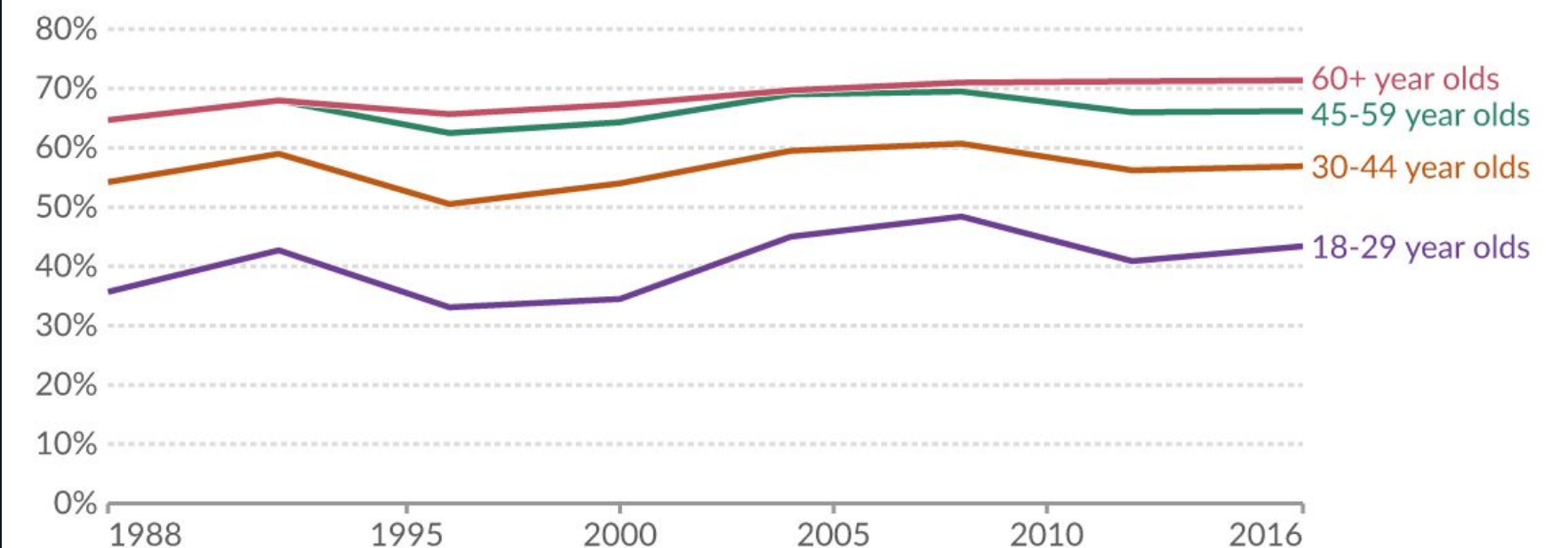
**Figure 1.** Turnout rate by age in Vienna using the maximum turnout estimator, relative to average turnout (67.6%).

*Note:* Graph for Vienna shows confidence intervals for the proportion ( $\pm 1.96 \times \text{S.E.}$ ); total  $n=5,411$  within 59 clusters.

## Election voter turnout rate by age in the United States

Our World  
in Data

Percentage of voting-age citizens in the United States who voted in the presidential election.



Data source: United States Elections Project

OurWorldInData.org/usa-electoral-turnout | CC BY

University of Vienna, Austria, 2014

# Common myths

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## Myth #3

This is just an extra  
vote for the children's  
parents

- We see differently in studies conducted in Scotland, whose voting age is 16
  - Teens are equally likely to vote the same as their parents as they are to vote differently

# Other Efforts to Lower the Voting Age to 16

## Within the State

Boston, Cambridge, Somerville  
H.720/S.389 (191), H.686 (193)

## Within the Country

San Francisco, California; Maryland;  
Washington D.C.

## Worldwide

Austria, Brazil, Scotland, Norway,  
Argentina, Cuba, etc.



**thank you!**



# Tufts Findings



## Encourage students to vote because:

They are more likely to look upon voting favorably later in life and be more educated

### Youth Taught or Encouraged to Vote in High School Are Better Prepared for the 2020 Election

The percentage of young people, 18-29, in each category for whom the following is true:

■ Received Encouragement to Vote in High School ■ Taught about Voter Registration in High School ■ Both ■ Neither

#### Are paying "Some" or "A Lot" of attention to the 2020 elections



#### Agree that the outcomes of the 2020 election will make a significant impact on everyday issues involving their community



#### Have ever seen information about how to vote by mail or absentee

